

THE IOWA BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: Petition for Declaratory Ruling)	Declaratory Ruling No. 3
Filed by Carol Sue Hinton,)	Administration of O-T-C
June 21, 1985.)	Medications by School Nurses

A petition for declaratory ruling was filed with the Iowa Board of Nursing by Carol Sue Hinton, R.N., Chairperson, West Des Moines School Nurses, on June 21, 1985. The specific questions presented in the petition were:

1. Does state law allow registered nurses to administer over-the-counter medications to children enrolled in the public school system upon parental request?
2. Should the parental request be in writing?

The Board is authorized to issue declaratory rulings "as to the applicability of any statutory provision, rule, or other written statement of law or policy, decision or order of the agency" pursuant to Iowa Code § 17A.9 (1985). See also 590 I.A.C. § 1.3(4).

The Iowa Board of Nursing has determined that the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Administrative Code do not forbid administration of over-the-counter medications by a registered nurse.

The registered nurse, using education and experience, may determine that the use of over-the-counter medication, ordered by a parent, is the appropriate care for some children. Thus, the registered nurse may follow a parent's direction to give such a medication. However, the registered nurse may also determine that an over-the-counter medication, ordered by a parent, could be detrimental to the child. In this case the registered nurse may refuse to administer the medication and state the reasons, in writing, to the parent.

If the parent pursues the matter and returns with a physician's prescription for the medication the registered nurse must then "execute the regimen prescribed by a physician" unless the registered nurse notifies the physician in a timely manner, as stated in Iowa Administrative Code, Nursing Board (590), Chapter 6, subrule 6.2(5), paragraph "d."

"Executing the regimen prescribed by a physician. In executing the medical regimen as prescribed by the physician, the registered nurse shall exercise professional judgment in accordance with minimum standards of nursing practice as defined in these rules. If the medical regimen prescribed by the physician (e.g., medication not administered) is not carried out, based on the registered nurse's professional judgment, accountability shall include but need not be limited to the following:

(1) Timely notification to the physician who prescribed the medical regimen that the order(s) had not been executed and the reason(s) for same.

(2) Documentation on the patient/client medical record that the physician has been notified and reason(s) for not executing the order(s)."

The second question asked if the parental request should be in writing. The Board advised that parental instructions in writing provide proper documentation of the request and avoid any future misunderstanding as to whether the nursing process had been utilized as specified in Iowa Administrative Code, Nursing Board (590), Chapter 6, subrule 6.2(2).

July 25, 1985
DATE

Ann E. Mowery
ANN E. MOWERY, Executive Director
Iowa Board of Nursing